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• We Can Now Sleep With Our Eyes Closed –Residents

Suspected militants, fleeing from the joint military aerial bombardments, killed two people and abducted at Ikorodu community in Lagos State. The military bombardment of the creeks along Ogun and Lagos states started on Thursday and continued yesterday.

It was gathered that militants, who escaped from Ikorodu creeks, escaped into Yewa Phase 5 Estate. It was at the estate they kidnapped two persons and also allegedly killed two others.

A vigilante, who did not want his name mentioned, explained that some of his colleagues, stationed at Ikorodu, called and informed him about the killing and abduction. He said: "Immediately we got the information, we mobilised and repositioned ourselves within the community.

There were also some soldiers in our area. They were deployed to prevent reprisal



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attacks. My colleagues and I were unable to sleep because we did not want to take chances.

We have increased our patrol of community since we started what I call 'Operation flush them out.' "One can never tell, but they might want to regroup and come back into the community.

That was part of the reason we beefed up security." When our correspondent visited the bombarded creeks at Arepo yesterday, a lot of clothes, adults and children's shoes, cooking utensils and burnt animals littered everywhere.

A resident of Arepo said the people were happy with the dislodgement of the militants from the creek. He said: "We were not informed before the operation started. When we heard of the explosions, it took some of us by surprise.

The sound of the explosions made some of the residents to abandon their property and fled the community. We have been held hostage for many years in the community; but we thank God for artilleries deployed by the military into the creek.

"My family and I were able to sleep with our eyes closed. The same thing is applicable to other residents; we can now all sleep well. Even some of us, who are landlords, missed the monthly community meeting for Saturday due to peace that had returned to the community.

"We are appealing to the military to make the bombing a continuous process! We want these militants out of our community totally." Narrating what the impact of the militants' repeated attacks on the community, another resident said that a man, who used to produce sachet water, closed shops and left after he escaped being kidnaped last week.

An 87-year-old woman, who also did not want her name in print, said the bombardments, meant God had answered her prayers. She said: "When I moved into this community in 2007, it was peaceful. Suddenly, everything changed.

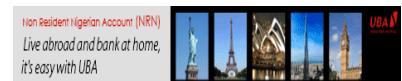
When the militants went on the rampage, my children advised me to move out of the community, so I would not be killed. I told them to leave me alone; that we are going to overcome them. "I went into prayers.

I prayed that the militants should be flushed out. Now, my prayers have been answered. We can now sleep with our eyes closed." It was, however, learnt that four militants, who were fleeing from the bombardment, ran to Igbo Olomu area of Ikorodu, into the hands of members of the Oodua People's Congress (OPC). The OPC members engaged the militants in a gun battle at Yewa community and were able to facilitate the release of two landlords.

These landlords had earlier been abducted by militants, while attempting to escape from the military. It was gathered that an OPC member was killed during the duel, but others arrested four suspected militants.

The militants were handed over to the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) in charge of Owutu Police Station. The OPC members, from Ogbagba zone, said they responded to a distress call, that militants invaded Yewa area of Olainukan, where they kidnapped two people.

One of the people they kidnapped was a landlord, identified as Mr. Daniel. The OPC



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members caught up with the militants, who had by then, relocated to part of the creek. The kidnapped victims were rescued.

The militants were alleged to have regrouped and attacked the OPC men, killing Tunde Sogunro in another round of gun duel. An OPC leader, who spoke on the condition of anonymity said: "People have been saying that OPC people are not doing anything about the militants in Yoruba land.

Now, we have lost our member. People should come out, to say that OPC rescued two people. The two people were kidnapped by militants. Nobody will come out now and say something about compensating Tunde's family."

The OPC leader further expressed the readiness of the group to tackle the menace of pipeline vandals. He said: "We know the terrain more than the security agents. They need to invite us and discuss with us, before we can do anything."

The coordinator of the OPC, in the zone, Mr. Femi Atiku, confirmed the arrest of the suspects to journalists. He said the arrest of the militants, was a communal effort by the zonal unit of the group.

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